

IOTA's 50TH Anniversary

RSGB IOTA Convention, Beaumont House, Windsor, 4-6 July 2014



Over the weekend of 4 to 6th July 2014 the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Islands on the Air (IOTA) programme at Beaumont House, Windsor, UK. This will be a truly international celebration of IOTA programme with island enthusiasts from the UK and around the world in attendance. Sponsored by leading UK amateur radio dealer Martin Lynch & Sons (ML&S) it is hoped that this will be one of the most memorable events of 2014.

The Beaumont features in many DXers' memories. It was where the annual HF and IOTA Convention was held from 1991 to 2001. They recall its beautiful setting in 40 acres of countryside just by the River Thames. Nearby is Magna Carta Island where the famous charter of civil rights was sealed, with Windsor, its castle and other attractions just up the road. The Beaumont has undergone major refurbishment and is now one of the most popular conference centres/hotels in the area.

The event will start on the Friday afternoon with a welcome of guests followed by a celebration dinner. The focus of the evening will be on recognition of the debt owed to the worldwide IOTA community for the programme's success.

The Saturday will be taken up with a full programme of IOTA talks by speakers well-known to the IOTA Community. **For many the key event will be the announcement of 10 new IOTA groups including two that will be decided over the weekend in response to representations.** Cezar Trifu, VE3LYC will give the inside story on the recent two year IOTA Marathon, both as a participant and as chair of the adjudication team. Roger, G3KMA will reminisce on the progress of IOTA over the past 50 years. Presentations will be given on the TX6G operation from Raivavae (OC-114) by Don Field, G3XTT, on the perilous LU6W operation from Escondida (SA-096), the last South American group to be activated, by Cezar VE3LYC (don't miss this) and on

the CW5F operation from Timoteo Dominguez (SA-057) by Ghis Penny, ON5NT. In addition there will be presentations on the HP0INT/x operations from all 6 Panamanian IOTAs by the Invoker Team (MMONDX, F4BKV, EA3NT), on the TKxINT IOTA operations by Vincent Colombo, F4BKV, on the annual IOTA Contest by a Contests Committee representative and on other recent DXpeditions as the programme is finalised. Time will also be set aside for an IOTA Forum which will be an occasion for a lively discussion on subjects such as the future of QSLing, (including the route to paperless QSLing), the cost of DXpeditions and challenges faced in accessing those remaining New Ones.

The evening Gala Dinner will be a special event with musical entertainment. Some of the overseas prize winners in the IOTA Marathon have made their bookings to receive their prizes at the Saturday Gala Dinner. As this will be the largest gathering of IOTA aficionados in recent years, we are sure that there will be much discussion of IOTA's achievements over the past 50 years and expectations for the future.

A partners' programme will be organised on the Saturday to include a visit to Windsor. Sunday will continue with presentations by well-known speakers into the late morning when the formal part of the event will close. Guests will be able to stay as long as they wish in the public areas and lunch can be purchased if required. Given sufficient interest, a river trip will be arranged late-morning at cost for those wanting something special – attendees will be asked a month ahead of the event so that arrangements can be made.

Whether or not you have been before, this is an opportunity not to be missed. Travel connections are easy, with access to the M3, M4 and M25 nearby. By train the connection is either Windsor Central to Paddington via Slough or Windsor and Eton Riverside to Waterloo. For those travelling by air, Heathrow is just 10 miles away – special reduced taxi rates are available if arranged through the Beaumont.

Hotel packages, dinner and lunch tickets and day tickets can all be booked online via www.rsgbevents.org. Act now and take advantage of the early bird discount by booking before 30 April. Day visitors will be very welcome and can also book attendance. The programme will, as it develops, appear on the RSGB Convention web-pages at www.rsgb.org/iota50 with the finalised programme in June.

This will be a truly international celebration of IOTA. Well-known island enthusiasts both from the UK and overseas have booked to come. Some were at the Beaumont in those early years, particularly at the 30th anniversary party in 1994 or at the millennium celebration, and want to experience the pleasure of "HF and IOTA Convention Revisited" in such attractive surroundings. The occasion is not just for returning visitors but for new ones who want to enjoy the camaraderie of IOTA island chasers and activators mingling together and discussing their experiences on near and remote islands. The dates were chosen to encourage overseas visitors intending to attend Friedrichshafen 2014 (27-29 June) to make it a summer holiday by travelling across to Britain afterwards. You will find the warmest of welcomes here in July. We intend it to be truly a convention to remember.

Roger Balister, G3KMA
RSGB IOTA Committee

Book online via www.rsgbevents.org

